

Bill Passes Overwhelmingly by Voice Vote on House Floor

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(Washington D.C.) Today, Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) brought legislation to the House floor that ensures the Executive Branch the continued ability to take national defense and civil emergency precautions in the event of war or a natural disaster. H.R. 6894 reauthorizes the Defense Production Act (DPA) of 1950, which has been utilized in some form by every Administration since it was enacted during the Korean War.

"The DPA was originally enacted during the Korean War to combat rising wages and prices that caused serious economic difficulties in the country," Rep. Gutierrez said Tuesday night in an address to Congress. "In an effort to expand production for the war effort and insure economic stability, President Truman used the Act to establish the Office of Defense Mobilization, institute wage and price controls, strictly regulate production in heavy industries, such as steel and mining, and order the dispersal of wartime manufacturing plans across the nation."

"In addition to its national defense uses, the DPA holds the promise of helping to mitigate civil emergencies during peacetime," he continued. "For example, during the California energy crisis, former President Clinton authorized the U.S. Energy Secretary to use the Act to compel a continuing supply of natural gas to Pacific Gas & Electric."

Today, as the United States works to rebuild from the damages caused by Hurricane Ike, and continues to rebuild from Hurricane Katrina, the DPA remains a key component of our national security and civil emergency readiness.

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